



*Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor*

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



*Thomas J. Stosur
Director*

September 11, 2018

REQUEST: Construct two-story single family rowhouse

ADDRESS: 1600-1602 Portugal Street (Fells Point)

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Construction of a two-story house with final design plans to return to staff.

STAFF: Walter Edward Leon

APPLICANT(S): Raquel Alsruhe, Cliff Addison

ARCHITECT: LDB Studio

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT: The site is located on the western edge of the Fells Point Historic District, near Broadway. Fells Point is significant as one of the original three settlements that merged to form the earliest form of Baltimore City. The area is directly linked to early maritime trade, an essential early force in Baltimore's growth and development. In addition to the significance of Fells Point in the eighteenth century, the community has continued to play an important role in Baltimore history as a constantly growing and changing urban place. Many of the earliest extant buildings were expanded in the Victorian era creating a unique blend of pre-Revolutionary War and post-Civil War architectural styles and characteristics. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Fells Point has been a diverse neighborhood composed of many ethnic groups each influencing the growth and development of the area.

Site Conditions: The property is currently clear save for one remaining original rear wall. The demolished historic building was part of a side-alley row located off Bethel Street, another alley street. The historic property was originally composed of two two-bay rowhouse dwellings that were combined between 1914 and 1951 to act as a garage. The other remaining structures on Portugal Street are small scale rowhouses and a matching adjacent garage all of which were constructed along with 1600 Portugal St.

BACKGROUND

- In May of 2016 CHAP staff reviewed and approved a full rehabilitation project.
- In 2016, the owner commenced work on the building. Due to structural problems the walls collapsed. The original bricks were salvaged by the owner following the collapse. The remaining portion of the walls were dismantled by hand. This dismantling was done without permits or CHAP approval.
- In February of 2017, construction continued on the site.
- In May 2017 a Stop Work Order was issued by a housing inspector as a result of the unpermitted work. The Housing Inspector advised the owners to amend their permits to account for the technical demolition.
- In October 2017 the Stop Work Order was lifted by the City when the fines for the demolition were paid by the owner.
- In April 2018 the applicants submitted a new construction permit and included the request for a demolition to account for the collapse and dismantling of the structure in 2016. The applicants were informed that a full commission hearing would be required.

PROPOSAL

The applicants propose to construct a new single family house to match the historic property. The plans submitted match the appearance and fenestration pattern of the original structure and is slightly larger than the adjacent, still intact carriage house. The original structure was noted as a contributing property to the district at the time of designation in 2007. It was a modest two-story brick carriage style house located off an alley street and just two blocks west of the main corridor of Broadway.

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

- *2.1 Guiding Principles for New Design:* The original historic building was a two story brick four bay wide carriage style house built after 1860. The building is located on an alley street which is off another alley street that lies near the heart of the Fells Point historic district, just west of Broadway. The building was unoccupied at the time the original rehabilitation proposal was received and approved in 2016. The proposal is to re-construct a building using the original brick and to match the original height, scale and massing of the historic building that collapsed and was later dismantled.
- *2.2 Site Design:* The proposed structure covers the full width of the lot and replicates fenestration patterns and opening sizes that are found in the similar and slightly smaller adjacent carriage style building as well as the original structure (see below). The proposal fits with the overall pattern of the adjacent historic buildings which are composed of carriage house structures and small working class late Italianate styled rowhouses. And the proposed building will have the same full lot coverage and incorporate a new rear deck element that is not visible from the public right of way.

- *2.3 Scale and Form:* The proposed new structure complements the height, massing and scale of the surrounding historic structures and closely matches the original building that existed on the site. The proposed design replicates the original and adjacent historic structures massing and fenestration rhythm. The proposed building matches the original gable roof slope and angle.

ANALYSIS

The applicant has designed a structure that replicates the height, massing, scale and details of the original historic structure, but allows for contemporary interior space and a new rear deck not found in the original building.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Fells Point Design Review Committee was informed of the application, reviewed it and gave favorable support for the new construction.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve construction of a new two-story dwelling with final design plans to come to the staff for final review.

Eric L. Holcomb
Executive Director

Site Map



View from the South



Construction of New Rowhouse at 1600 Portugal Street (Fells Point Historic District)

View from the East



View from the North



Construction of New Rowhouse at 1600 Portugal Street (Fells Point Historic District)

Current conditions



Existing streetscape and similar matching carriage house.



Construction of New Rowhouse at 1600 Portugal Street (Fells Point Historic District)

Streetscape view from alley entrance



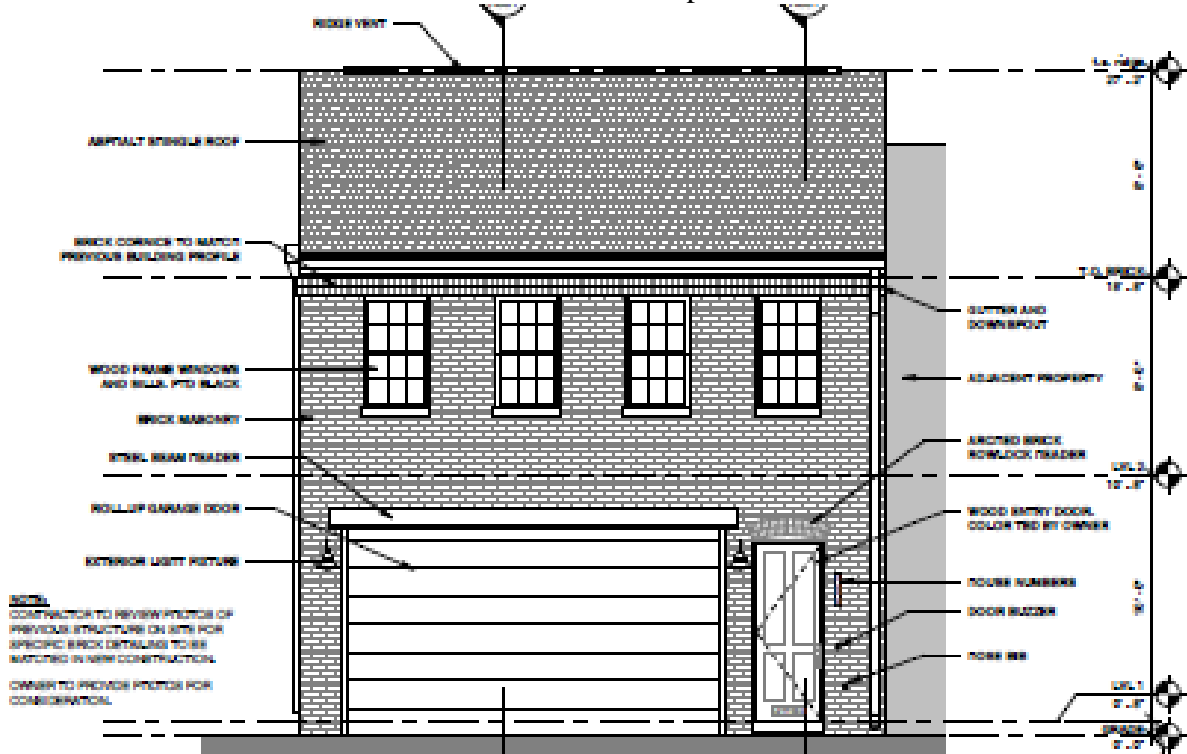
Original structure photos



Construction of New Rowhouse at 1600 Portugal Street (Fells Point Historic District)



Reconstruction Proposal



Construction of New Rowhouse at 1600 Portugal Street (Fells Point Historic District)



Construction of New Rowhouse at 1600 Portugal Street (Fells Point Historic District)

Proposed side elevation

